

KIRITAKA English Journal Vol.8

~ Stay Independent, Stay as ONE TEAM ~ Apr. 14th, 2022

Why are Japanese people so attracted to cherry blossoms in spring?



Have you enjoyed seeing the cherry blossoms this spring? If you are a new student, especially when you took part in the entrance ceremony, your parents may have taken pictures of you with cherry blossoms in the background.

Have you ever thought about why Japanese people are so attracted to them? Is it just because they are beautiful? Of course, most of you don't think so.

Certainly, you find beauty in cherry blossoms, especially in the color of the petals; their light pink color might give you a sense of cuteness, fleetingness and fragility, but I don't think you are attracted to just the color of them.

Cherry blossoms last only ten days. It often rains during this season, and sometimes strong winds last for three or four days. In that case, you have only one or two days to enjoy seeing cherry blossoms. Just one or two days in a year! You may feel they are fleeting and priceless, so you might consider cherry blossoms to be so valuable and sweet.

Furthermore, the impression of winter and spring might influence your feelings. You might consider winter to be "hardship", and spring "a great success", and you are likely to regard cherry blossoms as the symbol of spring. That is why you can use a phrase "Sakura Saku", which means "You passed the entrance examination".

As you know, great success comes after hardship. So, you can endure hardship. While you are struggling, you are looking forward to having a great success. The longer you feel hardship, the greater your success feels.

In addition, in Japan there is the concept of *wabi sabi*. *Wabi* is said to come from beauty found in poverty. *Sabi* is said to come from one found in oldness. The Japanese sense of beauty is deeply related to this *wabi sabi* ideal. So, even they bloom for such a short time, cherry blossoms are praised and admired for their understated beauty. Japanese people tend to think that beauty may also be found in things that you easily lose. In this case, you can consider cherry blossoms to be the peak of your life and you are likely to feel you easily lose the peak time of your life as you grow older.

Generally, cherry blossoms bloom in a geographical order in Japan; they first appear in the warm climate of southern Japan and make their way to the Kanto region, which includes Gunma, then up to Tohoku in the north, and finally to Hokkaido. Since cherry blossoms typically only stay on the trees for around ten days, or two weeks at most, you might have checked the cherry blossom forecast. That way, you can enjoy the cherry blossom season at its peak every year.

Now we have to prevent the further spread of COVID-19 outbreaks. Nevertheless, at the beginning of April, I went to Kezoji Park and enjoyed watching cherry blossoms at night as an annual event for my family, and last Sunday I went to Gunma Flower Park with my family, and enjoyed the different peak time of cherry blossoms there (of course, we all wore masks, and stayed quietly for only a short time). There is a word in Japanese known as *Ohanami* and it is definitely something worth experiencing. These experiences with someone important for you might be clearly recorded in your brain as a precious memory of your life. Time flies, so do enjoy your peak time! I hope the KIRITAKA English Journal will be accepted by you!! (Toru Hoshino)



★ T's Power Song ★ There are a lot of songs whose titles are related to cherry blossoms, but I'll introduce you a video clip of a song which has impressive scenes. Also, its lyrics imply the fleetingness and fragility of life. Teenagers especially worry about their futures and sometimes get lost. That is why a lot of teenagers sympathize with its lyrics, and feel relieved. I hope many of you get power from this song!

<https://youtu.be/TE-RGGXEmds>



Kiwi Corner

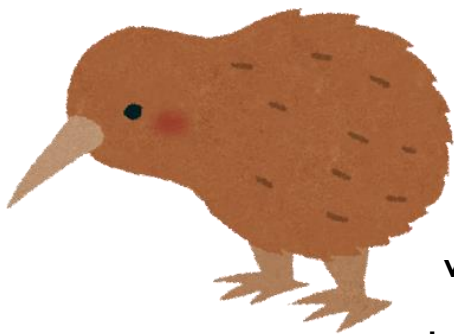


A new year has begun at Kiryu High School! To the new first grade students, welcome! To the returning second and third grade students, welcome back! It is wonderful to see you again.

For those who don't know me, my name is Liam Campbell. This is my second year at Kiryu High School, and I am the assistant homeroom teacher for 1-3. I am from New Zealand, a beautiful island nation like Japan, but I have lived in Gunma for almost ten years. It's a pleasure to meet you all.



Welcome to Kiryu High School!



You may be wondering about the title of this page, "Kiwi Corner". The kiwi is the national bird of New Zealand. It is very rare and is only found in New Zealand. It's very cute, don't you think? Also, New Zealanders are commonly called "Kiwis", so I

decided to give the name "Kiwi Corner" to my section of this monthly journal.



This is not a kiwi.



The beaches in Tauranga.

My hometown is the beautiful city called "Tauranga", and it is famous for its beautiful beaches. Tauranga is also famous for kiwifruit, and the kiwifruit company Zespri is based there. If you ever get the chance, please visit!

Through this article, I hope to introduce to you some interesting aspects of New Zealand culture, and also cultures and events from around the world. I hope you enjoy reading it.

Finally, I'd like to introduce you a favorite song of mine. This song's message is that your life has just begun, and that you still have many things to experience; the story of your life is still "unwritten". So, with the beginning of this new school year, you should challenge yourself to try as many new things and experiences as you can! You can listen to the song here: <https://youtu.be/b7k0a5hYnSI>

(Liam Campbell)



The Joseph Article

Fun Facts About Connecticut!!



Hi! It's the start of the new school year! The weather is warming up, the Sakura trees have blossomed, yadda yadda yadda...

To the 1st year students, "Hello, my name is Joseph. I am the ALT here at Kiritaka. I am looking forward to our classes together this year!" To the 2nd and 3rd year students, "It's good to see you again, I am also looking forward to our classes together this year!"

As most of you remember, I am from Connecticut (sometimes written as "CT"), which is that tiny state between the two very big cities of New York and Boston. Although Connecticut is small, it has a lot of history as one of the oldest states in America. Over the centuries, many important and interesting things have come from Connecticut and I hope to share a few of those things with you today. Let's begin!...

1) When **it comes to food, lollipops were invented by George Smith of New Haven, Connecticut** in 1908. He had this idea of putting candy on a stick so that it is easier to consume. Lollipops were originally soft rather than hard. **The first hamburger was also made in Connecticut. Louis' Lunch** in New Haven, Connecticut is the first and the oldest still operating hamburger serving restaurant in the U.S. **CT is also home to some of the oldest (and very best!) pizzerias in America.**



2) Four important, but very different **inventions** from Connecticut are the **can opener** by Ezra Warner in 1858, **anesthesia** by Horace Wells in 1844 (Nitrous Oxide was used at the time), the **Polaroid Instant Camera** by **Edwin Land** and the **first American Dictionary** written by **Noah Webster** in 1806.



3) As for **rules**, in 1901, **the first law regulating the speed of a motor vehicle was imposed in Connecticut.** The speed limits were 12 mph(19.31km) within cities and 15 mph(24km) on country roads. Also, in the captial city of Hartford, **it's illegal to cross the street by walking on your hands.**



Connecticut has a long and rich history of very interesting people and inventions, as well as a couple of unique rules. In fact, many of the inventions and rules that were started in Connecticut prove helpful, even today around the world. So, to that, what can I say except...

